

# FINDING RECORDS OF YOUR ANCESTORS, PART A

# ICELAND

## 1835 TO 1900



Beginning Icelandic researchers will also need: *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), since early Icelandic censuses and church records have some Danish words in them.

If your ancestor lived in Iceland between 1835 and 1900, follow the steps in this booklet to find the records of his or her family. These instructions will show you which records to search, what to look for, and what tools to use. One piece of information will lead to another until you have identified each family member and filled out a family group record.

**1** Find your ancestor's [birth record](#) in church records.

**2** Find your ancestor's parents and brothers and sisters in the [census records](#).

**3** Find the [birth records](#) of your ancestor's brothers and sisters in church records.

**4** Find the [marriage record](#) of your ancestor's parents in church records.

Latter-day Saints: Now see additional instructions for submitting names for temple ordinances.



The steps and tools you will need are described inside. ►

## HOW TO BEGIN—PREPARATION

You should have already gathered as much information as possible from your home and family and filled out [family group records](#) and a pedigree chart. You may have checked FamilySearch™ or other computer files to see if others have researched your Icelandic family.

## To begin:

A. From your pedigree chart, choose an ancestor who was born in Iceland between 1835 and 1900. You must know the birth date and birthplace (parish) in order to find your ancestor's family. It is helpful to know the county where the birth parish is located.

B. Write your ancestor's name in the children's section of a new family group record. Read through the instructions in this booklet. Then follow the steps below to find your ancestor's family.

## Tips

If you don't know your ancestor's birth date:

- Start with a more recent generation. You will learn how to do research, and you will probably discover something you didn't know about your family.
- Find the records for this family in the example given. This will teach you basic research skills before you search for your own family. This is a good class activity.

If you don't know the parish where your ancestor was born, see [“Tips” on page 6](#).

[illegible]

### A. Jon's pedigree chart

# Family Group Record

# typing, set spacing at 1 1/2 Page # of

<b>Husband</b> <small>(Given name)</small>		<b>Last name</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
<b>Born</b> (day month year)	Place			LDS ordinance dates	Temple
Christened	Place			Baptized	
Died	Place			Endowed	
Buried	Place			Sealed to parents	
Married	Place			Sealed to spouse	
Husband's father <small>(Given name)</small>		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Husband's mother <small>(Given name)</small>		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
				<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
<b>Wife</b> <small>(Given name)</small>		<b>Last name</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
<b>Born</b> (day month year)	Place			LDS ordinance dates	Temple
Christened	Place			Baptized	
Died	Place			Endowed	
Buried	Place			Sealed to parents	
Spouse father <small>(Given name)</small>	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased		
Spouse mother <small>(Given name)</small>	Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased		
<b>Children</b>		Last child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.		LDS ordinance dates      Temple	
1	<b>GIVEN NAME:</b> <i>Sigríður</i> <b>BORN:</b> <i>8 Feb 1872</i> <i>Stokkseyri, Ames, Iceland</i>	<b>LAST NAME:</b> <i>GRÍMSDÓTTIR</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
	Christened			Baptized	
	Died			Endowed	
	Buried			Sealed to parents	
	Spouse name <small>(Given name)</small>	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
	Maiden name			<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
2	<b>GIVEN NAME:</b> <i>Thorkell</i> <b>BORN:</b> <i>19 May 1895</i> <i>Stokkseyri, Ames, Iceland</i>	<b>LAST NAME:</b> <i>THORKESSON</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
	Christened			Baptized	
	Died			Endowed	
	Buried			Sealed to parents	
	Spouse name <small>(Given name)</small>	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
	Maiden name			<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
3	<b>GIVEN NAME:</b> _____ <b>BORN:</b> _____    _____	<b>LAST NAME:</b> _____		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
	Christened			Baptized	
	Died			Endowed	
	Buried			Sealed to parents	
	Spouse name <small>(Given name)</small>	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
	Maiden name			<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	

Select **only one** of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.

☐ **Option 1—Family File** Send all names to my family file at the \_\_\_\_\_ Temple.  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Option 2—Temple File** Send all names to any temple, and assign proxies for all approved ordinances.

☐ **Option 3—Ancestral File** Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.

Your name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date prepared \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Windows file no. 4 031 1596

Write place as: Town, State, County, Country, USA or  
St. Martin, St. Vincent, etc., if applicable.

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B. Jon begins a *family group record* with Sigríður Grímsdóttir listed as a child.

## THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The following pages walk you through the research process. In the case study, Jon is looking for the family of Sigríður Grímsdóttir. He takes his family group records and pedigree chart to a family history center. Here he

looks in the Family History Library Catalog for the records he wants and orders the microfilms he needs. He makes several visits to the center. Follow these same steps to find your family.

# THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Case study: Sigríður Grímsdóttir was born in 1872 in Stokkseyri Parish, Stokkseyrarhr., Árnes County, Iceland.

Your ancestor: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Iceland.  
name birth date parish clerical district county

## 1 FIND YOUR ANCESTOR'S BIRTH (CHRISTENING) RECORD IN CHURCH RECORDS. (See "Church Records: Birth," on page 9.)

A. At the family history center, Jon searches in the Family History Library Catalog for the parish in Iceland where his ancestor was born (Stokkseyri Parish). Then he looks for church records. (See "Using the Family History Library Catalog," on page 8.)

B. He finds the film number 0073715 and orders it. He finds Sigríður's birth record on the film. Her surname (family name) is listed as Grímsdóttir.

(See "Naming Customs" on page 13.) He photocopies the record for his files.

C. On the family group record, Jon writes:

- (1) Sigríður's birth information on the front, and
- (2) source information on the back (such as parish name, film number, volume and years covered, and page number).

Number	Name of Child	Birth Date	Christening Date	Parents	Christening Witnesses
1	Nafn barnsins	dagur dagur	Teldrar	Þeir	Þeir
2	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	1872.	1872.	Grímur Gestason og Elín, dóttir Bjarni Grímsdóttir	Þeir

## 2 FIND YOUR ANCESTOR'S FAMILY IN CENSUS RECORDS. (See "National Census Records," on page 10.)

A. Jon now looks for the first census after Sigríður's birth. Icelandic censuses are listed at the country level. Jon looks in the Family History Library Catalog for Iceland, then the topic "Census-1880."

B. Jon finds this census on FHL film 0073381.

C. On the film he finds the county of Árnes, then the parish of Stokkseyri, where Sigríður's family was living when she was born. The census lists the entire family.

D. Jon estimates the birth year for each family member from the ages given in the census by subtracting the age of the person from the year of the census. (These birth years will be approximate.)

E. On the family group record, Jon writes:

- (1) information about all family members on the front, and
- (2) source information on the back.

F. In the same way, Jon searches earlier and later censuses to see if there are any more children in this family.

Residence Name	Family's Enumeration	Person's Enumeration	Full Name	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Creed	Birthplace	Status in Family
Þeyrnarni 2	1	Grímur Gestason	R	41	G	Luthean	Þeyrnarni	Þeyrnarni	Þeyrnarni
	2	Elín Bjarnadóttir	R	39	G	—	—	—	—
	3	Páll Grímsson	R	11	O	—	—	—	—
	4	Bjarni Grímsson	R	10	O	—	—	—	—
	5	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	R	9	O	—	—	—	—
	6	Valgerður Grímsdóttir	R	6	O	—	—	—	—
	7	Guðmundur Grímsson	R	3	O	—	—	—	—
	8	Bjarni Grímsson	R	1	O	—	—	—	—

**Family Group Record** If typing, set spacing at 1 1/2. Page      of     

Write date as: 4 Oct. 1866

Write places as: Tynon, Polk, North Carolina, USA or St. Marins, Birmingham, Warwick, Eng.

<b>Husband</b> Given name(s) <i>Grímur</i>		Last name <i>GÍSLASÓN</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized		
Died	Place	Endowed		
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents		
Married <i>27 Oct 1868</i>	Place <i>Stokkseyri, Árnessýsla, Iceland</i>	Sealed to spouse		
Husband's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
Husband's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
<b>Wife</b> Given name(s) <i>Elín</i>		Maiden name <i>BJARNADÓTTIR</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized		
Died	Place	Endowed		
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents		
Wife's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
Wife's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
<b>Children</b> List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.				LDS ordinance dates      Temple
1	Sex <i>M</i>	Given name(s) <i>Páll</i>	Last name <i>GRÍMSSON</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
Christened	Place	Endowed		
Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
2	Sex <i>M</i>	Given name(s) <i>Bjarni</i>	Last name <i>GRÍMSSON</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
Christened	Place	Endowed		
Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
3	Sex <i>F</i>	Given name(s) <i>Sigríður</i>	Last name <i>GRÍMSDÓTTIR</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
Christened	Place	Endowed		
Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
Spouse Given name(s) <i>Thorkell</i>		Last name <i>THORKESSON</i>		
Married <i>17 May 1895</i>	Place <i>Stokkseyri, Árnes, Iceland</i>	Sealed to spouse		
Select <b>only one</b> of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Option 1—Family File</b> Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Option 2—Temple File</b> Send all names to any temple, and assign proxies for all approved ordinances. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Option 3—Ancestral File</b> Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.				
Your name		Address		
Phone ( )		Date prepared		

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Front of family group record

<b>Sources of information</b> Add further information on attached sheets as necessary.	
1 <i>Stokkseyri Parish Records</i>	<i>FHL Film # 0073715 pp. 54, 59, 60, 65, 67, 68, 70, 74, 128</i>
2 <i>1880 Census of Stokkseyri Parish</i>	<i>FHL Film #0073381</i>

**Note:** Please take every reasonable step to see that the information on this form is as accurate and complete as practical. This will help maintain the integrity of Church family history files and reduce duplication of temple ordinance work.

Back of family group record



# THE RESEARCH PROCESS

3

## FIND BIRTH (CHRISTENING) RECORDS FOR YOUR ANCESTOR'S BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHURCH RECORDS.

(See "Church Records: Birth" on page 9.)

A. Now that he has estimated birth years, Jon looks for the birth records of Sigríður's siblings who were listed in the 1880 Census: Páll, age 11; Bjarni, age 10; Valgerður, age 6; Guðmundur, age 3; and "young" Bjarni, age 1. In the Family History Library Catalog, Jon finds FHL film 0073715, which covers the time period for their births. He finds the film and the birth records.

B. On the family group record, Jon writes: (1) information from the birth record on the front, and (2) source information on the back.

C. Jon browses the parish registers again to see if there are any other brothers and sisters. He does this because children who were born and died between censuses would not be in a census record.

Number	Name of Child	Birth Date	Christening Date	Parents	Christening Witnesses
<i>Trinborn fædd 1869</i>					
Nº	Nafn barnsins	Stöðing- Skim- andaga- dagur	Foreldrar	Skimmarvottar	
3	Páll Guims- son	18. 19.	Grimur Gislason og Elin Bjarnadóttir hjer a Reykjavíki	Gfr. Bjarni Hlamason og M. Þórtell Jónsson bandur a' Reykjavíki og Angeldjörð Guðmundsdóttir a' Gætteldum l.m.	
6	Þórunn Sveinsdóttir	5. 5.			
7	Guðrún				

4

## FIND THE MARRIAGE RECORD OF YOUR ANCESTOR'S PARENTS. (See "Church Records: Marriage," on page 11.)

A. Jon looks in the catalog for records of marriages performed where the oldest known child was born. In the church records for Stokkseyri parish, the marriage records are on the same film as the birth records (FHL film 0073715), but in another section.

B. Jon starts with the date of the first child's birth and searches earlier records until he finds the marriage. If he couldn't find it, then he would search later records.

(If he couldn't find the marriage in this parish, he would try the parish where the parents were born, as shown in the census, then neighboring parishes.)

C. On the family group record, Jon writes: (1) the marriage information on the front, and (2) source information on the back.

D. Jon has the information he needs for this family.

Number	Bridal Pair	Age	Engagement and Marriage Dates	Bondsmen	Remarks
<i>Gift hjóse 1867-68</i>					
Nº	Nafn og stítt brúðgöma	Alm. Giftingsdagur	Garamennur	Alm. Giftingsdagur	
4	Grimur Gislason og Elin Bjarnadóttir	28	Þórunn Gíslason og Elin Bjarnadóttir hjer a' Reykjavíki	Gfr. Bjarni Hlamason og M. Þórtell Jónsson bandur a' Reykjavíki og Angeldjörð Guðmundsdóttir a' Gætteldum l.m.	
1	Þórunn Gíslason og Elin Bjarnadóttir	28	Þórunn Gíslason og Elin Bjarnadóttir hjer a' Reykjavíki	Gfr. Bjarni Hlamason og M. Þórtell Jónsson bandur a' Reykjavíki og Angeldjörð Guðmundsdóttir a' Gætteldum l.m.	

Latter-day Saints now have the minimal information required for this family's temple submission. See additional instructions for submitting names for temple ordinances.

## NOW YOU CAN REPEAT STEPS 1 THROUGH 4 TO FIND ANOTHER FAMILY.

Look for the families of each of your ancestor's parents. Start with a new family group record, and look first for a birth record.

# HELPS FOR FINDING RECORDS

## Finding Places

To find records in the Family History Library Catalog and to search Icelandic church and census records, you will need to know the parish, clerical district, and county in Iceland where your ancestor lived.

### Place Levels (Jurisdictions)

Places are usually written from smallest to largest on family group records. Civil or court districts (found at the county level in Iceland) are not usually listed. However, it is a good idea to list the clerical district.

Ósyrarnes, (Village)	Stokkseyri, (Parish)	Árnes, (County)	Iceland (Country)
Stokkseyri, (Parish)	Stokkseyrarhr., (Clerical District)	Árnes, (County)	Iceland (Country)

You may also have a situation where a village within the parish has the same name as the parish: Laugardælir is a village in Laugardælir parish in Árnes County. This place-name would be recorded twice on the family group record for proper jurisdictional identification.

### Parish (*Sókn*)

To find births, marriages, or deaths in church records, you need to know the parish where your ancestor lived.

A parish is the area (jurisdiction) where a Lutheran minister served and kept records (similar to a Latter-day Saint ward). The parish is usually named for the largest town in the area.

### Clerical District (*Hrepp* or *Hreppur*)

Each Icelandic parish belongs to a larger ecclesiastical jurisdiction called a *hrepp* (clerical district). A clerical district consists of two or more parishes served by the same minister.

To find the clerical district, type the name of the parish in “Locality Browse” on the FamilySearch™ system at a family history center. You can also look for the clerical district in Eric Jonasson’s book. (See “Tips” at the top of the next column.)

### County (*Sysla* or *Syslu*)

To find census records, you need to know the county. It is also helpful to know the village, parish, and clerical district.

### Tips

To find your ancestor’s parish (*sókn*), see the following:

- If you know the county, see an alphabetical list of Icelandic parishes, clerical districts, and counties in the Icelandic Reference binder in the Family History Library. A nonalphabetical listing of parishes and counties and a map can also be found in Eric Jonasson’s *Tracing Your Icelandic Family Tree* (FHL book 949.12 D27j).
- If you know the village or farm, see *Index of Farms and Villages in Iceland, 1847–1848* (FHL fiche 6054058). This lists the parish, clerical district (*hrepp*), and county (*sysla*) to which that village or farm belongs.

When using Icelandic census records, look at the listings for the country.

To find your ancestor’s parish in the census records:

- Find the county name (*sysla*) on the film, and then look for the parish. Because Iceland has a small population, it may take only a few pages to list the entire population of the parish at the time the census was taken.

On family group records by genealogists:

- If four places are listed, the second place is usually the parish.
- If only three places are listed, the first place is usually the parish.

If you do not know where in Iceland your ancestor was born and your ancestor immigrated to the United States, see *Tracing Immigrant Origins Research Outline* (34111). (See “Where to Order Publications” on page 13.)

# HELPS FOR FINDING RECORDS

## Map of Iceland, Counties

### Iceland



The counties of Iceland



Árnes County with clerical districts

# HELPS FOR FINDING RECORDS

Using the Family History Library Catalog • Using Microfilm

## USING THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CATALOG

Use the Family History Library Catalog to find any record available from the Family History Library. In the catalog, you can find the call numbers that you need to find and order records. The catalog is available at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) and at family history centers.

To find the information you need in the catalog, click **Library**, and then click **Family History Library Catalog**.

### 1. Click **Place Search**.

You will see:

Place

Part of (optional)

### 2. For the “Place,” type: **the name of the parish**

### 3. For “Part of, ” type: **Iceland**

### 4. Then find a topic, such as **Church Records**.

### 5. Click on the title you want.

### 6. Click on **View Film Notes**.

### 7. Look for the kind of record you want—such as *Fæddir* (Birth)—for the years you want. Write down the FHL (Family History Library) film number.

For more help, see *Using the Family History Library Catalog* (30966).

## Tips

Use the place search to find Icelandic church and census records.

To find Icelandic church records, look in the parish.

To find Icelandic census records, look in the country.

If no records are listed when you type in the place:

- Look for spelling variations of the place-name.
- Make sure you type the name of the parish, not the village.

When you find a description of a record you need, copy the catalog page. This page usually lists the order of the places and record types you will find in the record (film).

When typing a place-name in the catalog, ignore diacritics (accent marks). For example, *Árnessýsla* (Icelandic for Arnes County) could be listed only as Arnes.

## USING MICROFILM

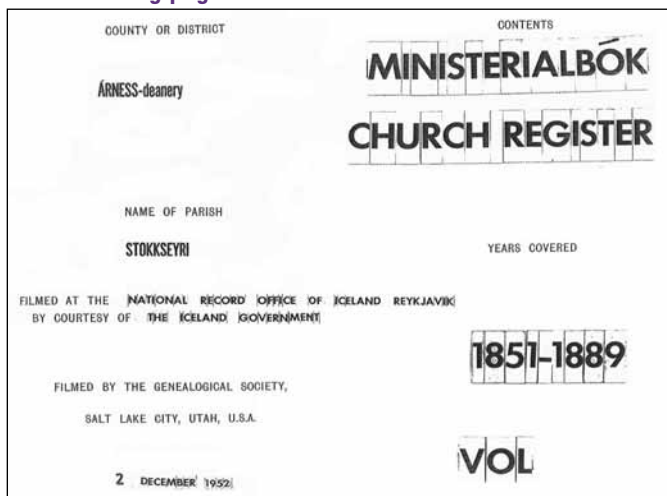
At this time, most of the Family History Library’s records are on microfilm. When you have found and ordered the microfilm you need, the family history center staff can help you find a microfilm reader and thread the film into the machine.

## Tips

When using the microfilm:

- Ask one of the family history staff members to help you if you are having problems with the microfilm reel.
- Make sure the years and topics on the title page are the years and topics you need. Three, four, or more separate books may be on a single microfilm. If the first title page doesn’t cover the years and topics you want, turn through the film to the next black space. Then look for the next title page and the years and topics covered.
- If the image will not come into focus, make sure the film goes between the two glass plates, not under them.
- Learn how to turn the handle to move the film backward and forward. Be careful not to roll the film off the reel.

**Most items or books on an Icelandic film have a title page and an ending page.**



Title page, Stokkseyri Parish, church records (FHL film 0073715).



This page on a microfilm indicates the end of this book of church records for Stokkseyri Parish.



# CHURCH RECORDS: BIRTH (FÆDDIR)

Late 1600s to Early 1900s

## Use Birth Records To:

- Find birth information for virtually every person who lived in Iceland.
- Verify the birthplace of an ancestor.
- Establish a time and place of a family's residence.

If you don't find your ancestor's birth record in one parish, look in nearby or other likely parishes.

Birth and christening information is found in the same record from about 1814 forward. The Icelandic word *fæddir* means "born." The infant baptism or christening date (*skínardagur*) is also listed in this record.

**1814** Standardized forms were used to record vital record information. Iceland was under Danish rule until 1944, so the Icelandic church records follow much the same format as the Danish. The majority of the column headings in the Icelandic church books are handwritten rather than printed. For help, see *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029).

**About 1883–1887** Many of the church record headings began to be printed, rather than handwritten.

## Content

- Child's name
- Parents' names, sometimes occupation, and residence (which is also the child's birthplace)
- Godparents' or witnesses' names
- Birth date
- Christening (baptism) date

## Tips

- Write down the names of the godparents and witnesses at the christening. These may be relatives, friends, or important members of the community whose names may lead you to other relatives.

- Other church records give confirmation, death or burial, arrival or removal, and ecclesiastical census information.
- For help reading the records, see *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), because some of the earlier Icelandic church records and census records use Danish words and column headings. (See "Where to Order Publications" on page 13.) Look for English translations of the record headings.

## Searching Birth Records

Before searching, you must know:

- Your ancestor's name.
- The parish and county of birth or residence.
- The approximate birth date.

Located at:

- [Family History Library and family history centers](#)
- [Iceland National and Regional Archives](#)

[Family History Library Catalog](#):

Place search:

Place

Part of

Topics to choose: **Church Records**

Search by:

1. Gender for birth (*fæddir*) records. Males (*Karlkjns, Piltar, Piltbörn, Sveinbörn, or Sveinar*) are listed on the left side of double pages. Females (*Qvennkjns, Meybörn, Stúlkur, Stúlkubörn, or Meyjar*) are listed on the right side.
2. Date (year, month, day), from earliest to most recent.
3. Name.

Male Births 1869						
Number	Name	Born	Christened	Parents	Witnesses	
<i>Sveinbörn fædd 1869.</i>						
N <sup>o</sup>	<i>Nafn barnsins</i> <i>andage</i>	<i>Sveinbörn</i> <i>dagur</i>	<i>Förelðrar</i>	<i>Skírmarvottar</i>		
8	<i>Páll Grímsson</i> <i>son</i>	18. 19.	<i>Grímur Gíslason og</i> <i>Elin Bjarnadóttir</i> <i>híð á Óseyrarnesi</i>	<i>Mr. Bjarni Hannesson og</i> <i>Mr. Þorkell Jónsson, bændur</i> <i>á Óseyrarnesi og Ingibjörg</i> <i>Gudmundsdóttir á Loptstöðum, Lón</i>		
<i>Guðmundur</i>						
#8	Páll Grímsson	18 Aug (1869)	19 Aug (1869)	Grímur Gíslason and Elin Bjarnadóttir, married couple at Óseyrarnesi	Mr. Bjarni Hannesson and Mr. Thorkell Jónsson, farmers at Óseyrarnesi, and Ingibjörg Gudmundsdóttir of Loptstöðum	

1869 Birth Record for Páll Grímsson (FHL film 0073715)

# NATIONAL CENSUS RECORDS (MANNTÖL)

1703 to 1901

## Use Census Records To:

- Find family members and members of the household.
- Learn the names, ages, and birthplaces of brothers, sisters, parents, grandparents, and so on.

If you do not find your family in a census, look in nearby parishes.

The census does not list children who were born and died between censuses.

## Content

- Names
- Ages
- Relationships
- Birthplaces (beginning with the 1845 census)
- Occupations

Icelandic national censuses are available for these years:  
1703, 1762, 1801, 1816, 1835, 1840, 1845,  
1850, 1855, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1901

Additionally, Icelandic ministerial or ecclesiastical censuses, known as *salnaregistur*, were taken at the parish level yearly. These censuses list the name, age, and sometimes the birthplace of each person living in the household. They are found with the listings for church records. They begin in the 1700s and could extend into the 1900s.

## Tips

- Reading the ages is usually easier than reading the names. Figure out how old your ancestor would be; then scan the age column for persons that age (give or take a year). Then try to read the names.

- Later censuses have more columns and information than earlier censuses.
- For help reading the records, see *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), because some of the earlier Icelandic church records and census records use Danish words and column headings. (See "Where to Order Publications" on page 13.) Look for English translations of the record headings.

## Searching Census Records

Before searching, you must know:

- Your ancestor's name.
- The parish or clerical district, county, and approximate time he or she lived there.

Located at:

- [Family History Library and family history centers](#)
- [Iceland National and Regional Archives](#)

[Family History Library Catalog:](#)

Place search:

Place

Topics to choose: **Census**

Search for:

1. The year of the census.
2. The county and then the parish.
3. The age and then the name of a family member.

Main Census of the population in Stokkseyrar Parish, Arnes County, South District (taken) 1 October 1880														
Residence Name	The Family's Enumeration	The Person's Enumeration	Every Person's Full Name	Sex Male or Female	Age	Marital Status	Creed	Birthplace	Status in Family					
Adalkeyrsla um fólktal m. fl. í Stokkseyrar sókn, Arnes sýslu, 1 Súður amt, 1. október 1880.														
Boja nefn og hús.	Númer.	Fullt nafn allra heimamanna á hverjum hús eða í hverju húsi. Öskið hús tilfærast á þann hátt, að sagt sje til kyns barnanna (öskirður drengur eða óskirð stífa).	Kyn karlkyr (K.) eða kvenkyr (Kv.)	Aldur hvers eins; að eins full aldurs á skulu meðtaln. Börn, sem eru á fyrsta árinu tilfærast sem „ógið árs-gjafi“.	Gift (G.) ógift (Ó) skilið, skila (S) eða skilið frá hjólaðandi (S).	Trúarbrögð.	Fæðingarstæður (öfn og amt, að land, ef fæddur er utan Íslands).	Staða á heimilinu, húsbóndi, húsmóðir, börn, atvika, hja., menn til húsa á heimilinu, nafnbót, embætti, starf, atvinnuvegur, eða á hverju þeir lifa, eða hvert þeir eru á sviði.	Af þessum voru:				Atvikaemdir.	
									maki og kvenna húsfr.	hvarfandi (ó vng og ógift kvenn).	Minnst tölur ynglinga (óvng).	Bjarnar.	gættuðir.	
Öseyrarnes 2	1	Grímur Gíslason	K.	41	G	Luthern	Arnes	Bóndi						
	2	Elín Bjarnadóttir	Kv	39	G		Arnes	Hona hant						
	3	Páll Grímsson	K.	11	O		Arnes							
	4	Bjarni Grímsson	K.	10	O		Arnes	Bjarni						
	5	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	Kv.	9	O		Arnes							
	6	Valgerður Grímsdóttir	Kv	6	O		Arnes							
	7	Gudmundur Grímsson	K.	3	O		Arnes	Arnes						
	8	Bjarni Grímsson	K.	1	O		Arnes							
Öseyrarnes 2	1	Grímur Gíslason	M	41	Md	Lutheran	Here in the parish	Farmer						
	2	Elín Bjarnadóttir	F	39	Md	"	likewise	His Wife						
	3	Páll Grímsson	M	11	Unmd	"	likewise	Their						
	4	Bjarni Grímsson	M	10	Unmd	"	likewise	Children						
	5	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	F	9	Unmd	"	likewise							
	6	Valgerður Grímsdóttir	F	6	Unmd	"	likewise							
	7	Gudmundur Grímsson	M	3	Unmd	"	likewise							
	8	Bjarni Grímsson	M	1	Unmd	"	likewise							

1880 Census Record for the Grímur Gíslason family (FHL film 0073381)

# CHURCH RECORDS: MARRIAGE (GIFT HJÓN)

Late 1600s to Early 1900s

## Use Marriage Records To:

- Find a couple's marriage date and place and their ages.
- Find bondsmen, who may be family members.

If you don't find a marriage record, search nearby parishes. In large cities, marriage records may be in a separate book. In other places, marriages are in the same book as the baptism, confirmation, death and burial, and moving records. Records are usually in this order: births, confirmations, marriages, and then burials.

## Content

- Groom's name, age, occupation, residence
- Bride's name, age, occupation, residence
- Bondsmen
- Marriage date

Two bondsmen are listed in these records. Bondsmen are similar to a best man in a wedding party. Bondsmen knew the bride and groom and attested that they were legally able to get married.

## Tips

- To find a marriage record, look first in the parish where the first known child was born. Then look in parishes where the parents were born (as listed in census records), and then nearby parishes.
- For help reading the records, see *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), because some of the earlier Icelandic church

records and census records use Danish words and column headings. (See "Where to Order Publications" on page 13.) Look for English translations of the record headings.

## Searching Marriage Records

Before searching, you must know:

- The names of the bride and groom.
- The approximate birth date of the first child.
- The parish of residence.

Located at:

- [Family History Library](#) and family history centers
- [Iceland National and Regional Archives](#)

[Family History Library Catalog](#):

Place search:

Place

Part of

Topics to choose: **Church Records**

Search for:

1. The parish.
2. The date (year, month, day), from earliest to most recent.
3. The couple's names.

Marriages 1867-68					
Number	Names and Status of the Bridal Pair	Age	Engagement and Marriage Dates	Bondsmen	Remarks
<i>Gift hjón 1867-68.</i>					
<i>Nr. Nöfn og stjött brúðhjóna. Aldur. Stofningardagur. Stofningsmenn. Morgungift.</i>					
4	Grímur Gíslason— <i>þingmaður á Óseyrarnesi og yngstbarni</i> Elín Bjarnadóttir <i>í d.</i>	28 26	Banns first read on 12 Oct. (1868), married 27 Oct. (1868)	Director Gísli Gíslason at Stórahrauni and Bjarni Hannesson at Óseyrarnesi	The amount of the morning gift (dowry), 200 national dollars

1868 Marriage Record of Grímur Gíslason and Elín Bjarnadóttir (FHL film 0073715)



# ADDITIONAL HELPS

Reading Gothic Script • Summary

## READING GOTHIC SCRIPT

Reading the old-style Icelandic script may be more difficult than the Icelandic language. It may seem overwhelming at first, but you will find that although each scribe used a variation of the old-style script, they were all quite consistent in their writing.

You will also find that after learning the most common given names and a few common terms, you will be able to read most of the documents you encounter.

### Tips

- For help reading Icelandic and understanding handwriting, see *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), because some of the earlier Icelandic church records and census records use Danish words and column headings. (See “Where to Order Publications” on page 13.)
- For help reading Gothic script, see *Danish-Norwegian Paleography* (FHL fiche 6030017), or similar books.
- Practice writing the names of your ancestors in the handwriting style shown in the above publications. This will help you learn to read old Icelandic records much faster.
- Learn to recognize Icelandic names. About a dozen male and female names and their variations are used repeatedly.

The Icelandic alphabet has upper and lower case letters not found in English.

a á b c d ð e é f g h i í j k l m n o ó p q r s t u ú v w x y ý z þ(th) æ ö

Look for these letters at the end of the alphabet:

þ, æ, ö

The letters æ and ö are considered separate letters and not just inflections of an *a* or *o*.

The Danish letter Å could be written as *Aa*. The letters Å and *Aa* are interchangeable. If a word or a place-name begins with Å, it will be at the end of the alphabet. If it begins with *Aa*, it will be at the beginning of the alphabet.

## SUMMARY: FINDING AN ICELANDIC FAMILY FROM 1835 TO 1900

For detailed steps, see the case study on [pages 3–5](#).

1. Find your ancestor's birth record in the church records.
  - This verifies what you know.
  - Write down what you find, and record your source information.
2. Find your ancestor's family in Icelandic census records.
  - Look for the first census following your ancestor's birth. Check the census taken in your ancestor's birthplace.
  - Look in earlier and later censuses to see if there are other children.
  - Write down what you find (names, ages, birthplaces, and so on).
  - Estimate birth years from the ages.
  - Write down your source information.
3. Find birth records for your ancestor's brothers and sisters in church records.
  - Using places and estimated birth years from the census, look for birth records.
  - Write the information you find and your source information.
4. Find marriage records of your ancestor's parents.
  - Look for records of marriages in the parish where the oldest known child was born.
  - Start with the date of the first child's birth, and search backward and forward until you find the marriage.
  - Write down what you find, and record your source information.

Then follow the same steps to find a parent's family.



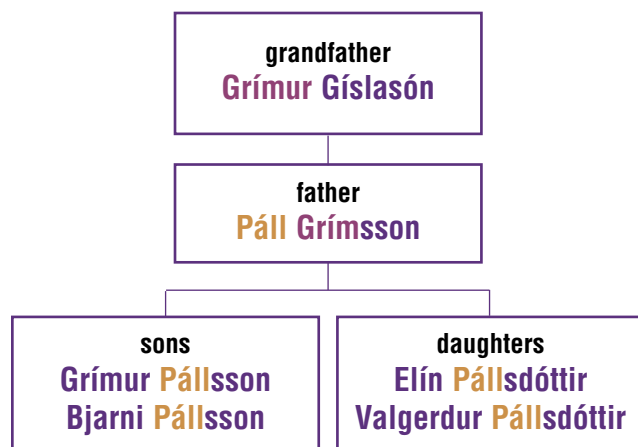
# ADDITIONAL HELPS

Naming Customs, Time Line, and More Resources

## Naming Customs in Iceland

Patronymics are still in use today.

- A boy's surname (family name) is his father's given name and the suffix *son* or *sson*.
- A girl's surname (family name) is her father's given name and the suffix *dóttir*.
- The woman's name doesn't change when she marries.
- Sometimes a person used an occupation, town name, or other nickname in addition to his or her patronymic surname, though that occurred more in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden than in Iceland.



## Time Line

- 1703 First complete national Icelandic census. This census has an every-name index.
- 1762 Next national Icelandic census. This census has a head-of-household index.
- 1801 Census format and column headings were the same as the Danish census in this and all subsequent censuses.
- 1814 Church records throughout Iceland began using standard terms—the same column headings as the Danish, though they were mostly handwritten rather than printed.
- 1816 Census. This year's census has an every-name index.
- 1845 Icelandic censuses began listing birthplaces.
- 1885 Church record headings began to be printed rather than handwritten.

## More about Icelandic Research:

- Eric Jonasson, *Tracing Your Icelandic Family Tree*. 1975. (FHL book 949.12 D27j).
- Genealogical Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Major Genealogical Record Sources in Iceland*. 1967 (Revised 1977). Research Papers Series D, #2.

## Archives and Libraries

Family History Centers

[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

Tel. 800-346-6044 Inside U.S. and Canada

801-240-1000 Outside U.S. and Canada

Family History Library

35 North West Temple Street

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3400 USA

Tel. 801-240-2331

Icelandic National Archives

(Þjóðskjalasafn Íslands)

Laugavegur 162

105 Reykjavík

ICELAND

[www.archives.is](http://www.archives.is)

E-mail: [info@archives.is](mailto:info@archives.is)

## Where to Order Publications:

- Distribution Services:  
Tel. 801-240-3800 (Salt Lake City area)  
Toll free 800-537-5971
- [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

All Family History Library publications are described in: *Family History Materials List* (34083).

# Family Group Record

If typing, set spacing at 1 1/2. Page of

Write date as: 4 Oct. 1896

Write place as: Tryon, Polk, North Carolina, USA or  
St. Martins, Birmingham, Warwick, Eng.

<b>Husband</b> Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized			
Died	Place	Endowed			
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents			
Married	Place	Sealed to spouse			
Husband's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Husband's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
<b>Wife</b> Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized			
Died	Place	Endowed			
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents			
Wife's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Wife's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
<b>Children</b> List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.				LDS ordinance dates	Temple
1	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name			
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
2	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name			
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
3	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name			
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
Select <b>only one</b> of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.			Your name		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Option 1—Family File</b> Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.			Address		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Option 2—Temple File</b> Send all names to any temple, and assign proxies for all approved ordinances.					
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Option 3—Ancestral File</b> Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.					
			Phone ( )		Date prepared

<b>Husband</b> Given name(s)			Last name	
<b>Wife</b> Given name(s)			Maiden name	
<b>Children</b> List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.			LDS ordinance dates	Temple
4	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized
		Christened	Place	Endowed
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse
5	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized
		Christened	Place	Endowed
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse
6	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized
		Christened	Place	Endowed
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse
7	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized
		Christened	Place	Endowed
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse
<b>Other marriages</b> List other marriages and sealings of the husband, wife, and children on this form. List any necessary explanations.				
<b>Sources of information</b> Add further information on attached sheets as necessary.				

**Note:** Please take every reasonable step to see that the information on this form is as accurate and complete as practical. This will help maintain the integrity of Church family history files and reduce duplication of temple ordinance work.

# INDEX

alphabet . . . . .	12	jurisdiction . . . . .	6
archives . . . . .	13	libraries . . . . .	13
birth records . . . . .	9	map of Iceland, counties . . . . .	7
catalog . . . . .	8	marriage records . . . . .	11
<b>census records</b> . . . . .	10	microfilm . . . . .	8
<b>church records</b>		naming customs . . . . .	13
birth . . . . .	9	parish . . . . .	6
marriages . . . . .	11	patronymics . . . . .	13
counties . . . . .	6, 7	place-names . . . . .	6
country . . . . .	6, 7	preparation . . . . .	2
death records . . . . .	9, 11	process, research . . . . .	2, 3
districts . . . . .	6	reading Gothic script . . . . .	12
family group record . . . . .	14–15	<b>research process</b> . . . . .	2–5
family history centers . . . . .	13	step 1 . . . . .	3
Family History Library . . . . .	13	step 2 . . . . .	3
Family History Library Catalog . . . . .	8	step 3 . . . . .	5
finding places . . . . .	6	step 4 . . . . .	5
Gothic script . . . . .	12	script . . . . .	12
handwriting . . . . .	12	searching . . . . .	9, 10, 11
how to begin . . . . .	2	summary . . . . .	12
Iceland, map of . . . . .	7	time line . . . . .	13
Icelandic National Archives . . . . .	13	village . . . . .	6

## Other publications you will need:

*Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029)  
*Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346)  
*Using the Family History Library Catalog* (30966)

For Latter-day Saints:  
 Instructions for submitting names for temple  
 ordinances.

## Please send suggestions to:

Publications Coordination  
 Family History Library  
 35 North West Temple Street  
 Salt Lake City, UT 84150 USA  
 Fax: 801-240-5551

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